

Message Text

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14

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 L-03 PM-04 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

DODE-00 OMB-01 /025 W

----- 078138

R 110400Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5428

INFO AMEMBASSY BAN

AMCONSUL UDORN

CINCPAC

LIMITED OFFICIAL ISE VIENTIANE 5920

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, LA, US

SUBJ: DISMISSED CASUAL-HIRE GUARDS

REF: A. VIENTIANE 5800

B. VIENTIANE 5751

1. ON AFTERNOON OCTOBER 2, ONE OF THE FOUR DISMISSED FSL GUARDS, WHO HAD NOT RECEIVED HIS PAY AND SIGNED ACQUITTANCE, CAME TO OFFICE OF FSL GUARD SUPERVISOR WITH DOCUMENT WHICH HE REPRESENTED AS SUMMONS FOR THREE LOCAL GUARD SUPERVISORS TO APPEAR BEFORE THE MIXED POLICE. PER EMBASSY INSTRUCTIONS, GUARD SUPERVISORS REFUSED TO ACCEPT DOCUMENT, STATING IT SHOULD BE DELIVERED TO EMBASSY RECEPTION DESK THROUGH NORMAL CHANNELS. THE FORMER GUARD THEN DEPARTED, TAKING HIS DOCUMENT WITH HIM.

2. ON MORNING OF FRIDAY, OCTOBER 3, SENIOR FSL GUARD SUPERVISOR, KONGKHEO KEORAJ, SUBMITTED HIS RESIGNATION, EFFECTIVE THAT DATE, STATING HE COULD NO

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LONGER WORK FOR THE EMBASSY OR CONTINUE TO LIVE IN

LAOS. HE REPORTEDLY HAS LEFT LAOS AND WILL SEEK REFUGEE STATUS.

3. ON FRIDAY EVENING, THE OTHER TWO FSL GUARD SUPERVISORS WERE ARRESTED BY THE MIXED POLICE AND DETAINED FOR THREE HOURS. THE FOUR FORMER GUARDS, WHO WERE THE COMPLAINING WITNESSES, REPORTEDLY STATED TO THE POLICE THAT THE EMBASSY HAD AGREED TO PAY THREE MONTHS' SEVERANCE PAY BUT THAT THE GUARD SUPERVISORS HAD KEPT THE MONEY FOR THEIR OWN USE. THE GUARD SUPERVISORS WERE ABLE TO SECURE THEIR RELEASE BY CONVINCING POLICE OF UNLIKELY NATURE OF DISMISSED GUARDS' CHARGES. BEFORE THEIR RELEASE, HOWEVER, THE SUPERVISORS WERE TOLD TO REPORT TO A MEETING AT THE LAO FEDERATION OF LABOR (LFL) ON SATURDAY MORNING. EMBOFF TELEPHONED LFL OFFICE SATURDAY MORNING AND REITERATED EMBASSY'S POSITION, AS AGREED TO BY MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, THAT ANY FURTHER DISCUSSION OF THIS MATTER SHOULD BE THROUGH MOFA PROTOCOL OFFICE. LFL OFFICIAL (KHAMPHENG) DENIED ANY KNOWLEDGE OF MEETING, STATING IT WAS INDEED A MATTER FOR MOFA AND THAT HE HAD ADVISED GUARDS TO DEAL WITH THAT MINISTRY. HE SPECULATED THAT GUARDS HAD GONE TO THE MIXED POLICE ON THEIR OWN.

4. ON MONDAY, OCTOBER 6, THE FOUR FORMER GUARDS CAME TO THE EMBASSY TO REQUEST THAT THEY BE PAID SALARY DUE THEM FOR HOURS ACTUALLY WORKED (EXCLUSIVE OF FOUR DAYS' GRATITY PAID TO THE NINE GUARDS WHO HAD SIGNED ACQUITTANCES). THEY STATED THAT THEY INTEND TO CONTINUE TO PRESS FOR THREE MONTHS' SEVERANCE PAY. FOLLOWING NORMAL EMBASSY PRACTICE WHEN EMPLOYEE DOES NOT APPEAR ON REGULAR PAYDAY, FORMER GUARDS WERE PAID WITH CHECKS DRAWN ON EMBASSY'S NATIONAL BANK ACCOUNT. FORMER GUARDS WERE UNABLE TO NEGOTIATE THESE CHECKS DUE TO CONTINUED FREEZE ON EMBASSY ACCOUNT AND REQUESTED EMBASSY MAKE CASH PAYMENTS. (SEE SEPTTEL) WE REFUSED TO CASH CHECKS, STATING THAT WE CONSIDERED THEM TO BE LIGITIMATE PAYMENTS IN THAT SUFFICIENT FUNDS TO COVER CHECKS WERE IN EMBASSY'S ACCOUNT, AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SUGGESTED THIS WAS A MATTER BETWEEN THEM AND THEIR GOVERNMENT.

5. AFTER FAILURE TO NEGOTIATE CHECKS, ALL FORMER GURDS CAME TO EMBASSY MORNING OCTOBER 9 TO ASK IF IT WAS STILL POSSIBLE FOR THEM TO RECEIVE THE FOUR-DAY GRATUITY THAT WAS PAID TO THE OTHER NINE DISMISSED GUARDS. ADMINOFF REPLIED THAT THIS WOULD BE POSSIBLE IF

GUARDS WOULD SIGN ACQUITANCES IN BOTH ENGLISH AND
LAO. ALL FOUR AGREED TO DO SO AND RECEIVED THEIR PAY AND
SIGNED ACQUITANCES MORNING OF OCTOBER 10.

6. COMMENT: EMBASSY NOW CONSIDERS MATTER TO BE
CLOSED.
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Message Attributes

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